

A RECORD OF OUR SHIPPING

The Business Handled Here During the Past Year.

SOME ERRORS CORRECTED

Grand Aggregate of Arrivals Reaches More Than Seven Thousand Craft of All Kinds, With Clearances in Proportion—Total Value of Cargoes Unknown—The Need of a Maritime Exchange Emphasized.

The Bureau of Statistics of the Board of Trade and Business Men's Association of Norfolk, through its admirable statistician, Mr. Edgar E. Dawes, issued during the first week of January the following statement of shipping for the port of Norfolk and Portsmouth for the year 1898:

VESSLS ENTERED AND CLEARED

Entered	148
Tonnage	245,327
Cleared	592
Tonnage	962,116

COASTWISE.

Entered	2,220
Cleared	1,971

EXPORTS FOR 1898.

255 head cattle	\$ 18,500
5,435,722 bushels corn	3,590,925
600,724 bushels wheat	4,467,489
27,228 barrels flour	155,788
Bread stuff	25,700
238,460 tons coal bit	529,732
Coal, ships use	298,932
42,703 bales cotton	139,846
5,405,220 pounds copper	68,324
51,619 bales cotton	2,678,432
25,338 tons pig-iron	233,344
8,700 gallons oil	5,867
Lumber and lumber	1,176,775
33,631,411 pounds lead	1,987,511
2,701,511 pounds tobacco	127,731
2,692,936 stalks	178,350
Sugar	8,818
43,538 gallons alcohol	3,482
908,780 gallons cotton-seed oil	218,226
Nuts	11,657
Headings	9,861
5,435,722 pounds cotton waste	91,319
Barley	18,775
Grease	19,652
Peasants	674
Coal, anthracite	51,977
Phosphate	65,590
7,037,373 pounds tallow	21,524
6,725 pounds ham	8,319
4,052 tons sugar	87,069
2,554 tons iron rails	51,680
Miscellaneous	838,404
Total	\$13,609,657

The imports were for the year 1898, \$203,002.

Mr. Dawes figures, so far as they go, are correct, the Custom-house books of record show just these facts. The main trouble with the figures and the fault does not belong to Mr. Dawes, but to another cause which will be shown later, is that they are incomplete and that they have gone out to the country as showing the entire amount of business done in shipping by this port during the past year, whereas only the foreign trade and the regular transportation companies are included. The Merchants and others of the Old Dominion, Clyde, James River, Virginia Navigation, Bay Line, Chesapeake Line and other lines, while the important connecting trade, the steamship, the barge, the tug and other square riggers, the schooners, barges, lighters, etc., is omitted.

ONE ITEM.

Take one item, not counted in the above statement, the following statement of the number of vessels and amount of their tonnage, passing through the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal during the twelve months ending December 31st, 1898:

NORTH—THROUGH THE CANAL TO NORFOLK.

Number	Tonnage
Steamers	1,290
Schooners and sloops	74
Barges, lighters, etc.	635
Total	2,069

Rafts of logs, 281

SOUTH—FROM NORFOLK TO POINTS SOUTH.

Steamers	1,290
Schooners and sloops	74
Barges, lighters, etc.	635
Total	2,069

Remember also that no vessel can pass through this canal drawing over eight feet of water, and it will readily be seen what an enormous aggregate is put in sight that is not accounted for at the Custom House. These vessels are not of necessity small, but are of extra beam and light draught, built especially for this trade.

It may be said that many of these vessels carry through cargoes from North Carolina to Baltimore, Philadelphia or Richmond. This is true of lumber craft, yet even of these a large share top-load at Norfolk to fill to depth they could not carry through the canal, and one has only to look at the files of this paper from day to day during the past year to see that general merchandise, corn, grain, oats, hay, truck, watermelons and fertilizers form a very large percentage of the cargoes and that their Northern trade terminal is Norfolk.

ADDITION.

Right here it might be opportune to add to this addition to the report of Custom House arrivals and clearances amounts to:

Customs entered (coastwise)..... 2,220
Customs arrived (coastwise)..... 1,971

Total..... 4,389
Customs cleared (coastwise)..... 1,971

Canal departed (coastwise)..... 2,669
Total..... 4,640

AN INTERESTING RECORD.

It will be observed that this puts a very different face on the matter and makes a better showing for the port, but this is not all. The record of "Shipping Reports" for the year 1898, kept by the Virginia-Pilot, and which is accounted by ship-masters, ship-brokers and shipping men generally, as practically correct, shows the following interesting record:

Vessels of all classes arriving at Norfolk during year 1898 (exclusive of Navy, Army, A. & C. Canal) and customs cleared coastwise..... 2,220
Vessels cleared..... 1,971
Those arriving are classified as follows:

Steamships (foreign and coastwise)..... 532
Square rigged vessels..... 1,154
Schooners..... 74
Barges, lighters, sloops, etc..... 635

It will be seen from this that eliminating the 435 foreign entries from the steamships and square-rigged vessels, leaves 220 not accounted for. Of the schooners, barges and sloops listed in the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal report, only 74 are included in this list, and these eliminated leave 146 not otherwise accounted for (this is a very liberal estimate which would give 218 arrivals to be added to the above). This makes the arrivals figure as follows:

Customs entered (coastwise)..... 2,220
Customs arrived (coastwise)..... 2,220
Arrived (coastwise)..... 2,220

A total of..... 4,389
Customs arrived (foreign)..... 435
Grand total of arrivals..... 4,824

A very pretty difference from the before published statistics, and undoubtedly correct or very nearly so.

By the same process of clearing the coastwise departures from the port were 6,000, and the grand total of clearances 6,355.

WHAT FIGURES DISCLOSE.

Now let us look at the figures a few moments, for they mean more than at first glance it may appear. It is a fair key to Norfolk's business interest.

The average tonnage of vessels passing through the canal, as shown from the report of the canal, is 20 and a fraction, but fully 90 per cent of those arriving at Norfolk from this source came loaded, which means just that amount of business for Norfolk.

The report of steamships, coastwise schooners and barges, lighters, etc., and as they do, from steamships and ships, barks, barkentines, brigantines and brig-schooners of five mast and two-masted, schooner and barge, lighters, etc., of 100 tons, perhaps 75 tons would not be far from safely as an average tonnage when it is remembered that such vessels as the Palmer's and Gray's, with capacities of 3,500 to 1,500 tons capacity are the very best of the fleet, and the R. King and other barges, but little smaller, are of the large contingent. Even with such modesty as this Norfolk's shipping tonnage arrived in 1898 stands at the very handsome figure of 2,225,427 tons, and her clearances in like proportion.

This estimate is based on the taking at random of thirty-five schooners, which had cargoes here during the past year, varying in tonnage from 50 tons to 3,400 tons, and is considered a fair one.

ANOTHER POINT.

Another point which claims interest from Norfolkians and those interested in Norfolk's shipping interests is this, which is comparatively new.

Exclusive of the 2,220 arrivals coastwise, customs entered, nearly all which brought cargoes to Norfolk, and of the 2,669 canal arrivals, fully 90 per cent, of which did the same thing, of the remaining 2,464 vessels reported as arriving at this port, 18 of which were foreign, 122 brought cargoes to Norfolk, or, in other words, 3,116 vessels (approximately) of the 7,341 arriving in this port were cargo laden for this port, a very fair showing.

What the actual tonnage of cargoes brought here and what their value can only be guessed at, but the actual tons tons cleared exports, taken as a basis with the statistics of the Board of Trade as two proportions, and the actual number of arrivals, coastwise and of the Board of Trade statistics as another, may give some little idea. At any rate, this statement will prove an awakening to Norfolk's citizens and will show the need of a perfectly kept record of shipping of this port, that the port may receive its just dues and take its true position among the shipping ports of the country.

First Case on Record.

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